

SAN JUAN COUNTY (UTAH). COUNTY RECORDER [904]

MINING LOCATION NOTICES (PETROLEUM), 1905-1941.

8 microfilm reels

DESCRIPTION: Mining location notices in this series document the petroleum boom which peaked in San Juan County in 1908-1909. After oil prospectors opened a gusher in March 1908, the ensuing stampede to the San Juan and Colorado Rivers resulted in the recording of nearly 10,000 location notices by July 1909 (Osmond L. Harline, "Utah's Black Gold," *Utah Historical Quarterly*, vol. 31, no. 3, p. 295-6). Federal mining law provided that valuable mineral deposits in the public domain were free and open to exploration and that the locators of the same were to have exclusive right of possession as long as they complied with federal and local law (*Statutes at Large, Treaties, and Proclamations, of the United States of America*, vol. XVII, chap. 152, also *Revised Statutes of the United States*, chap. 6, title 32). The first step toward ownership was the discovery of a potentially productive site and recording the claim or notice of location. Each notice affirms that the locator has complied with federal and local mining laws. Each notice names the claim and provides a description of it, and each notice provides the names of locators and their place of residence.

During the oil boom, the San Juan County recorder compiled several books of petroleum notices of location on preprinted forms. These books, which comprise this series, are in addition to many additional petroleum notices in the San Juan County recorder's mining record books (series 84250). The preprinted notices include several different formats. Some are location certificates signed by the county surveyor and authorized by the county recorder. The majority of location notices in these books were in the Monumental Mining District, including all of Petroleum Books 1-2. Many location notices were also in the Gabel Mining District, including all of Petroleum Book 3.

ARRANGEMENT: Within each book claims are arranged chronologically as recorded, however the books are not chronological.

RESEARCH NOTE: The rush on the recorder's office is evidenced both in the volume of records and the way they were put together. Apparently, the office did not have enough books to hold all, because Petroleum Books 1-3 had already been used for other purposes. Petroleum Book 1 was originally the mining record book of the Johnson Creek Mining District. After a few pages recorded by that district in the 1890s, the recorder filled the rest of the book by pasting petroleum notices over the top of each page. He likewise created Petroleum Books 2 and 3 by pasting notices over the tops of pages in already used books.

RELATED RECORDS: The claims filed in these books are referenced in MINING RECORDS INDEX (LOCATIONS), series 23583. Additional location notices for petroleum placer claims were recorded in MINING RECORDS, series 84250, and also in MISCELLANEOUS RECORDS, series 23400. MINING DISTRICT MINUTES, series 24042, relate Monumental District miners' efforts to manage petroleum exploration and drilling in 1908-1909. Earlier notices of location were filed with district recorders in the Monumental District MINING LOCATION NOTICES, series 24041, and in the Gabel District MINING LOCATION NOTICES, series 24039.

PROCESSING NOTE: San Juan County location notices for petroleum claims were microfilmed by San Juan County in February and March 2001 and processed by Rosemary Cundiff in January 2002.

PREFERRED CITATION: Cite the Utah State Archives and Records Service, the creating agency name, the series title, and the series number.

GAPS: There are apparent gaps in Mining Locations E, which skips from 1914 to 1927, and in Mining Record K, which skips from 1926 to 1933. Essentially, these breaks do not reflect actual gaps, but the San Juan County recorder used the remaining pages in one book and then the other for placer claims he recorded after the oil boom ended. In both books, the word "petroleum" has been crossed out on post-boom location notices.

CONTAINER LIST

Reel	Description
1	Mar 1905-Feb 1908 (Mining Locations A)
2	Mar-Aug 1908 (Mining Locations B)
2	Oct 1908-Feb 1910 (Mining Locations C)
3	Jan 1909-Feb 1911 (Placer Petroleum D)

Reel	Description
4	Jun 1910-Mar 1933 (Mining Locations E)
5	Aug 1911-Jun 1941 (Mining Record K)
6	Jan-Jul 1909 (Petroleum Book 1)
7	Feb-Oct 1909 (Petroleum Book 2)
8	Jan-Mar 1909 (Petroleum Book 3)